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ABSTRACT

The 2nd International Conference on Children's Rights in Education hosted approximately 150 child-centered international policy makers, who discussed the implications and implementation of children's rights to guide educational policy, research, and practice. This report presents an annotated agenda of the conference proceedings and, based on the presentations and discussions, a number of recommendations that describe the elements and the context that need to be in place to make children's rights in education a reality. Opening presentations are annotated, dealing with the role of conferences in policy change, implications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for a 14-year-old, and the significance of general comments on the Convention's article 29, on the aims of education. Subsequent presentations then summarized pertaining to the following areas: (1) the CRC and the protection, education, and participation of children; (2) education and culture; (3) cultural values; (4) alternative forms and meanings of education; and (5) education, the media, and the electronic communications revolution. Discussion streams then summarized; streams dealt the following topics: (1) human rights respecting learning communities; (2) children affected by war; (3) child labor; and (4) children and violence. The report the outlines factors to be addressed in the realization of children's right to child-centered education, and offers recommendations for developing child-centered learning opportunities. Finally, report describes the "Children as Partners" project to provide governments and civil society organizations with critical information and resources to help them implement proven best practices to promote and manage meaningful participation of children in decision-making. (HTH)

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Proceedings of the

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

Children's Rights Education

"Creating a Culture of Human Rights, Democracy and Peace in the New Millennium"

Victoria, August 18-22nd, 2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recent 2nd International Conference on Children's Rights in Education hosted approximately 150 child - centered international policy makers. This assembly of experts discussed the implications and implementation of children's rights to guide educational policy, research and practice. The Conference was presented by the Institute for Child Rights and Development, University of Victoria, in partnership with Child Rights Education International, the NGO Working Group on the CRC, UNESCO, UNICEF, Education International, the International School Psychology Association, the International Bureau of Education, the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, and both the Canadian and Swedish International Development Agencies.

The Conference built on the 1st International Conference on children's rights in education held in Denmark and initiated to advance respect and support for children's rights and the full development of children through education. The overarching theme of this year's Conference was ***"Creating a Culture of Human Rights, Democracy and Peace in the New Millennium"***.

An outstanding core of leading international experts made morning plenary session presentations challenging the assembly to apply cutting edge knowledge and visions to advance children's rights to, in and through education across a full range of protection, development and participation themes. Afternoon streams (working groups) further developed the morning plenary session topics in exploring the challenges of education in addressing issues of working children, children affected by war, violence, abuse and exploitation, and the creation of rights respecting learning communities. Many of the sessions focused on the issues of providing quality education to children in child-centred, culturally relevant ways.

The Conference focused particular attention on the implications of article 29 (aims of education) of the CRC with special regard to article 12 (children's meaningful participation) and article 28 (provision of education). Presentations and final recommendations were framed by the preparatory document for the UN General Assembly Special Assembly on Children (UNGASS), "The World Fit for Children" and the "General Comment" for article 29, adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In the concluding remarks both the opportunities and the challenges that exist in the realisation of children's right to child-centred education were pointed out. While globalisation, growing inequalities, poverty and budget cuts are important threats to children's well-being there are also some favourable elements, such as a number of supportive international documents, indications of commitment from some governments and a growing body of knowledge on what works. Included in the latter is the recognition that issues facing marginalized children are highly complex. Implementing education, which is respectful of children's best interests and human dignity, requires recognizing and addressing these complexities.

Based on the Conferences' presentations and discussions a number of recommendations are provided that describe the elements and the context that need to be in place to make children's rights in education a reality. One of the significant outcomes of the conference was the launching of the 'Children As Partners' initiative. This initiative builds on the conference themes in focussing on key issues affecting children and youth's meaningful participation and will result in an international research agenda and various future workshops and meetings.

CONTEXT AND CONTENT

Background

Since September 11, the need for building a rights-respecting environment – for teaching our children what it means to live and grow with "peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality, and solidarity," as stated in the CRC preamble is more pressing than ever. According to Senator Landon Pearson, a Canadian advocate for children, "Only when the world is fit for children will terrorism be vanquished." (Sept. 18, 2001, Ottawa, Ontario)

The 2nd International Conference, predating the September 11 tragedy, focused on issues highly relevant to producing a "World Fit for Children." Prior to the Conference, presenters and participants were provided, through the Child Rights Education – International website (www.childrightseducation.org), with a wealth of background information about the purposes and issues of the Conference. This information included material on relevant Convention on the Rights of the Child articles (e.g., 29and 28, and the General Comment for article 29), the evolving outcome document for the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session on Children ("World Fit for Children"), including perspectives of non-governmental organizations, and the program for the Conference. For 3 days immediately before the Conference, a "Child Rights Education Course" was presented for Canadians and international visitors interested in the foundations, characteristics, and implementation of international child rights standards. The course was offered to help persons prepare to more fully participate in the Conference.

Conference Overview

The Conference opened on the evening of 18 August with a welcome by Canada's First Nations and brief presentations by Canadian youth representative Nikki Sanchez-Hood and by UN Committee on the Rights of the Child members Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo and Judith Karp. The first three full days of the Conference were divided in two sections, morning of plenary presentations on a selected theme and afternoon of Stream Groups (working groups) on crosscutting topics. The final day of the Conference was devoted to the organization and presentation of Conference reports and concluding comments.

The morning plenary themes were: The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protection, Education and Participation of Children (19 August), and Education and Culture (20 August). Each plenary included related topic presentations by as many as 6 internationally renowned experts (brief overviews of presentations are provided in the next section). Within the plenary, two special panels were convened to explore "Cultural Values" (20 August) and "Education, the Media, and the Electronic Communications Revolution" (21 August). The afternoon Stream Groups, each with its own faculty and pool of resource experts, worked to clarify issues and give future direction to child rights advances for the topics: human rights respecting learning communities, violence and abuse against children, children affected by war, and child labor (see reports in a later section of this publication).

An important film on the child rights issues in the lives of working children in Bangladesh, entitled *A Kind of Childhood* and produced by a team led by Susan Bissell was premiered on the evening of 19 August.[1] Throughout the first 3 ½ days of the Conference Jeff Goldhagen (American Academy of Pediatrics) and Philip Cook (Institute for Child Rights and Development) synthesized information presented regarding cross cutting themes (e.g., HIV/AIDS, physical and mental health) and Conference

[1] Can be ordered from Xingu Films, London, UK, tel. 0207 451 0600

Rapporteurs Cynthia Price Cohen (Child Rights International Research Institute), Martha F. Erickson (Consortium on Children, Youth and Families, University of Minnesota), Gerison Lansdown (International Free Lance Children's Rights Consultant) and Martha Nelems (Canadian International Development Agency) gathered and organized information and recommendations from plenary and stream group programs. The last full day of the Conference was devoted to completion and presentation of the reports of the Stream Groups, to cross-cutting theme and youth perspective reports, to the rapporteurs' Conference report, and to concluding remarks by Gordon Smith (Director of the Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria), and by Committee on the Rights of the Child member Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo.

The over 150 international experts on child issues and practicing child-oriented professionals who participated added significant strength to the Conference deliberations. They raised questions and issues in response to and interaction with plenary and they worked hard as Stream Group members to find and give meaning and genuine hope for the future to their critical topics. The free periods during the Conference days and evenings provided opportunities to become acquainted with the beauty and hospitality of the University of Victoria and the city of Victoria and to review poster session presentations on major themes and Stream Group related-topics. The City of Victoria, situated on the West Coast of Vancouver Island in the province of British Columbia, famous for its seacoast location, beautiful gardens, and mild weather, was explored and enjoyed by many of the Conference participants.

These proceedings provide summaries of the panel presentations. We regret the inconsistencies in format and do not take responsibility for misinterpretation that may have been made of the presentations some of which were written by the presenters and others based on transcripts. The summaries are followed by concluding notes from the 4 stream groups, and the conference's final conclusions and recommendations, as provided by the conference rapporteur's.

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ANNOTATED AGENDA OF CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

OPENING PRESENTATIONS
Saturday August 18

The role of conferences in policy-change

Martha Nelems
Canada, Canadian International Development Agency

(Martha Nelems holds a critical position of leadership in the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). As a result of her related responsibilities and experiences she has learned well the value of conferences that effectively bring adult, youth and child experts together to work toward advances in the rights and quality of life for children and their societies. Here she shares her perspectives on such conferences.)

Conferences such as the International Child Rights Education Conference are important for those of us in the donor community, and for all of us concerned with promoting the rights of children, because they change the way we think about important issues. As a result of participating in similar conferences, CIDA has recently adopted a rights-based approach to its work with children in developing countries and countries in transition.

This means that our work is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and we as an agency are committed to promoting children's participation in programming initiatives meant to assist them and policy discussions about them. Conferences and the learning they bring to all of us have also helped us to better understand our failures. For example, we now understand that our inability to reach all children through our traditional health and education projects is a result of our lack of attention to those children in need of special protection, such as children affected by armed conflict and working children.

Another incredibly important function of conferences is that they remind us that policy construction does not happen in a vacuum and indeed, must be shaped by the realities of children's lives, not our perceptions of their lives. It has been young people, especially youth who have experienced significant denial and/or respect of their rights, who have effectively used conferences as an opportunity to convince us of their right to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. For example, at the International Conference on War-Affected Children held last year in Winnipeg, Ministers, NGOs, journalists and academics witnessed the power of youth participation through the many presentations and Conference interventions made by the youth delegates from Canada and from many countries experiencing armed conflict. Finally, Conferences offer those of us in the children's rights community an opportunity to strategize about how to promote greater attention to children's lives worldwide, and also to share advocacy successes with each other. Conferences are an incredibly important learning and networking opportunity for all of us, and I trust we will take full advantage of the time spent together at the International Child Rights Education Conference.

The Convention for a 14-year old

Nikki Sanchez-Hood
Victoria, Canada. National youth delegate to UNGASS

" To me the Convention is not just about adults helping children, it is adults helping children help themselves. "

The first time I heard about the Convention on the Rights of the Child I was thrilled that around the world government and decision-makers realized that it was about time children were given rights. To me the Convention is not just about adults helping children, it is adults helping children help themselves.

Many people want to know what it is that I talk about at the meetings I attend. I tell them that I share many of the concerns my peers and I in Canada have. But more important then what I say is what I heard from the other youth, what I learned from them. From meeting other children close in age to me, I realize the obstacles they had to overcome to get there. No matter how hard the struggle or how many mountains they had to face, it did not dissuade them because they believed in the rights of children so much that they were willing to give everything it took for their voices to be heard and the Rights of the Children in their country to be acknowledged and respected. Listening to these stories and experiences I was so inspired I felt as though if I really wanted to I could change things, however, the world reminded me: " I am 14 years old. I do not have a university degree. I cannot get a job or buy a lottery ticket." But I am no less of a person than an adult. They may have more years and education, but I wish they could respect that my experiences are just as real as theirs. I understand that there is a lot I can learn from you. Please do not let pride stand in the way of you learning from me as well.

Sometimes, I feel that the world wants me to grow up faster. I feel like people don't respect the things I say or what I have to give just because of my age. I don't want to be any older that I am, why does everyone else want me to be. We must ensure that our society does not punish children for being young. Value the innocence and beauty of childhood. Don't focus on what children cannot be, but cherish what they are. Please protect us, but do not shelter us so heavily that we grow to be blind and ignorant. Do not try to place our brains in a mold. Kindle them like fire. Incorporate our opinions so we grow to believe they are meaningful. It takes not just a community to raise a child, it takes a whole world.

The Significance of the general comments on Article 29

Judith Karp
Israel, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The importance paid by the Committee on the Rights of the child to education is reflected by the fact that its first General Comment is on the aims of education (art.29). The General Comment (GC) lays out a new vision of education from a child's right perspective. It envisions a dynamic process aimed at the promotion of the human dignity of the child. This vision reflects the innovative approach of the convention that depicts the child as a human being, the subject of rights which should be respected and basic needs pertinent to harmonious development.

The core message of the GC is that the child has a right to quality education and to a specified quality

(as defined in art.29) that is relevant to the realization of the child's full potential and personal autonomy in a way that balances physical, mental, spiritual, social, cultural, moral and emotional growth. The aims of education specified in Art. 29 are all linked directly to the realization of the child's human dignity, the components of which are the development of the inner self (29(1)(b); sense of identity and belonging and affiliation (29 (1)(c); socialization and identification with others (29 (1)(d); and with the environment (29 (1)(e).

This is a vision of a child centered, child sensitive and empowering education, tailored to the child's needs and evolving capacities, in which there is a unity between methodology, substantive content and the environment of learning which is community based. This is a vision of education, which is relevant to the child's everyday life, and social and cultural environment. It includes not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills, such as the ability to make balanced decisions, to resolve conflicts in a non violent way, to develop a healthy life style, good social relationships, critical thinking, creativity and a sense of responsibility to oneself and to others. This is a vision of education that promotes self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of identity and belonging within an ethical framework of tolerance and the respect for people who are different.

THE CRC AND THE PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN

Sunday August 19

Status and future of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Dr.E.Verhellen
Belgium, Children's Rights Centre, University of Ghent

By its comprehensiveness, its universal ratification and its legally binding character, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is challenging the 21st century with a "geo-political social contract". Historically speaking this is a brand new and unique instrument not only to tackle (re-actively) unprecedented aggressive bad consequences of globalisation, but also chiefly to build (pro-actively) a democratic global village based on respect for the human dignity.

At the very most the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be considered as a "provisional ending". Indeed the minimum standards have already been complemented by two optional protocols: the one relating to the involvement of children in armed conflicts, the other to the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Other efforts to raise and complement respect for the human dignity of children are taking place both at international (e.g. ILO Convention N° 182) and regional level (e.g. African Charter) levels. And of course, via the sustainable monitoring process, also the national and even subnational level will be empowered.

Although the overall human rights-project is hardly finishing its phase of "minimum-standard setting", one had to understand that the phases of "implementation" and "monitoring" have only just started. The human rights-project is like a baby just leaving maternity care! For sure this is the case of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Pushing forward the agenda of sexually exploited children

Vitit Muntharbhorn
Thailand, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Today we have the Optional Protocol for the Sale of Children that defines sexual exploitation as sexual trafficking, child prostitution, and child pornography. This definition is certainly useful but there are still many gray areas. Definitions have to be explained; there are also variations from one country to another. International instruments provide us with some guidance but not all guidance.

Following are 10 areas we need to be working on:

1. We have a number of instruments, such as the Stockholm agenda (1996) where some quantitative guidelines were set. Setting quantitative goals is important.
2. Let us aim for specificity of action to help us in the implementation process. The optional Protocol is better as it provides more details, although still lacking in some areas such as the need to prevent criminalization of the Child.
3. Let us give concrete meaning to child participation against sexual exploitation. Let us improve the network of children as advocates and protectors of children's rights nationally and internationally.
4. Let us address in a more concertive environment the old and new behind sexual exploitation.
5. Let us be very clear and educate everyone globally including policy-makers to not penalize the child victims of sexual exploitation.
6. Let us criminalize the adult who exploits children with effective laws, community vigilance.
7. Let the key child protection actors work together (e.g. civil society, NGOs, government)
8. Let us build capacity. More than training, it is education with a supportive system, review and follow-up.
9. Let us ensure consistent follow-up and monitoring, stronger linkages.
10. Let us educate ourselves to cooperate more in mobilizing resources (financial and non-financial) to convey the human face of globalization.

Ecological perspective and children's rights

Jim Garbarino
USA, Cornell University

It is my belief that we need to go beyond a simple unidimensional idea of children's right and cultural differences, to look at a more complex and if you will, challenging sense of cultural differences. When we speak about culture there are many differences, some simply of styles, others relate to goals (i.e. of socialization). Some norms can be simply wrong for a number of reasons: 1) Anachronistic (conditions no longer exist); 2) Cultural practice in conflict with founding principles; 3) Cultural practice violates factual information on child development.

From an ecological point of view, it is very difficult to think of what could be a universal right of children. If context is so important, is there anything that could be understood to be universal enough to be the kind of scientific foundation for a model of children's rights? I think there are at least two: the first one is the universality of attachment as a fundamental need for children; the second is that children are fundamentally spiritual beings.

In many ways the best way to understand the UN Convention is as a draft document of multiculturalism, of an effort to say: here's a kind of transcendent effort to take the best of the world's cultures and form it into a coherent statement about what it can and should mean to be a child. It is clear however that children are not simply short small adults; they have different capacities and needs.

Cultural issues and participation

Roger Hart
USA / ENGLAND, Children's Environment Research Group,
Graduate School of the City University of New York

The articles on children's participation rights, though highly controversial, are fundamental parts of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Furthermore, the U N Committee on the Rights of the Child has argued that participation is critical to the achievement of the "Best Interests" principle of the CRC. Children should have a voice because of their need for protection, so that their needs are properly met and, more generally, because participation is central to healthy social and psychological development.

More broadly interpreted, the CRC implies democratic citizenship. The document leads us to reflect on the fundamental importance and potentials of what democracy might become. It is very clear that we cannot teach democracy, and the belief that they have the right to be an equally participating citizen, in a traditional manner. The only way a child can truly learn democracy and their rights is by practicing them. Schools are an obvious starting place. Unfortunately, most schools throughout the world are authoritarian. But there are important examples of democratic schools and we should be looking closely at these in order to learn how to fulfill the challenge of the CRC in this kind of institution.

Children and youth's own organizations seem to offer a more promising opportunity for developing democratic practices with children. The recent story of child clubs in Nepal, for instance, is inspiring. There are highly inclusive settings with almost as many girls as boys and children of all castes. They are very participatory with children experimenting with alternative systems of organization. Certainly children in many of the clubs model the patterns of power exercised by adults in their own communities but because the children have been introduced to the CRC some have developed creative strategies for allowing all children to be involved in running them. It is interesting to ask why there are so few examples in the industrialized democracies where children and youth can meet and make decisions together in democratic ways. There has been a great decline in membership of children in organizations with their peers in these countries. There are many reasons for this but there is some data to suggest that this is partly because these organizations are organized autocratically. Too much of the effort to involve children in all countries is through specific programs. Inevitably, with such programs those who design them will determine the agenda. If we were to establish regular opportunities for children or youth to meet in a democratic manner to learn and to act upon their rights these clubs could be more self-determining and appealing to young people.

It is important to remember that the CRC clearly states in the preamble and in a number of articles that the family is the primary institution responsible for raising and protecting children. But the view of children as citizens with the right to an independent voice is a great challenge for most cultures. The approach of most development agencies of promoting rights has been directly through children before having a dialog with parents. This is not sufficiently respectful of them and can seem to undermine them. There is a need for more critical reflection by development agencies on this issue and for evaluations of the impact of child rights promotion programs. Families themselves are of course often the sites of abuses to children and for this reason it is valuable for children to be independently informed of their rights but there is a need for grater understanding of the particular cultural context in developing approaches to children's participation. In all cultures we need dialog sessions with parents in groups about children's rights, not "parental education", as a way of promoting the CRC.

> For more information see the video "Mirrors of Ourselves: Tools of Democratic Reflection for Groups of Children and Youth the children's clubs of Nepal" and the child club report: The assessment of a national experiment in children's democratic development. Available from Save the Children Alliance (post@savechildren-norway.org.np) or the Children's Environments Research Group (www.cerg1.org).

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Monday August 20

Transformation at all levels

Nandana Reddy
India, Concerned for Working Children

Learning is fundamental and inseparable from engagement in the world. Learning is an act of membership. Knowing depends on engagement in practice. Engagement is inseparable from empowerment and the right to contribute in the creation of meaning. This definition of education echoes the fundamental principles of Children's rights that would enable children to realise their rights and determine the nature and quality of services rendered to them. They are the rights to participation, organisation and access information leading to protagonism and their right to participate in governance

The formal school is one of the most undemocratic institutions in the life of a child and does not provide an education that empowers. Transformation of the school or the introduction of democratic principles within the school or even the expectation that the school can empower children to participate either within or outside the school is an unrealistic ambition for a mass scale. The child has several learning arenas: - within the home, school, the world of work, the community and the local government. Learning therefore should be enabled in all these arenas. Mere interventions in the formal schools to make education more meaningful or interesting will not serve the purpose.

The mechanisms for empowerment and the structures for participation should be created at all levels of decision-making from home to local governance. Only then will education become relevant to the lives of marginalised children and enable them to use this newfound knowledge to transform their lives and their schools. Crucial to this process is the need for structures and forums where children can

participate in an organised and meaningful way. These structures need to apply to all the arenas of a child. Attempts to bring about a change in the formal education system without addressing the larger environment of the child, have failed on a mass scale.

The Makkala Toofan or Children's Typhoon programme of CWC is one example of how all this can be translated into a strategy that is sustainable, viable and up scalable.

Relationships between children's work and their education

Bill Myers
USA , University of California

An international meeting of working children was discussing the value of their work. A boy from India said "There is work that binds you and there is work that frees you." Another boy, from Latin America, responded, "The same can be said about education". There is a crucial point for all of us examining the relationship between child work and education. Much of the rhetoric one hears on the subject assumes that work is inherently bad for children and that school is all to their good, as in the campaign slogan, "The place for children is in school, not work". Recent empirical research, however, suggests a far more nuanced view in line with the observations of the two boys. Both work and school can either enslave or liberate, depending on the circumstances. Both can be powerful learning experiences, and both can (and often do) discourage learning and stultify children's natural imagination and curiosity. Some of the most prestigious recent child development thought and research shows that children best learn even "academic" skills under conditions of social engagement and practical application that resemble apprenticeship. One of our conference speakers (Terezinha Nunes) is famous for demonstrating how young street-workers in Brazil learn through their work complicated mathematical skills that they have not been able to satisfactory learn at school. At the same time, both school and work can be detrimental to children. As Mary Joy Pigozzi reminds us, poorly schools may actually block learning and leave children's essential self-esteem in tatters, being as bad for children as is inappropriate work. Schools this bad are found overwhelmingly in rural and urban periphery areas serving the poor, which is where most working children live.

Most national and international policy assumes that children's work and their education are incompatible, but, again, empirical research does not support this view. Most children who work also achieve a basic education. Many children work in order to pay their school expenses. While child work tends to be statistically associated with lower education achievement, only sometimes does work seem to be the cause, such as when children work too many hours. Other factors, such as poor quality of schools or the effects of poverty, often provide a better explanation. In a number of places, in fact, research has found that children who work small amounts of time (never over twenty hours per week) actually perform better in school than do children who do not work at all. Where schools make an effort to adapt their hours or methods to the needs of working children they can drastically raise attendance and achievement—as Vicky Colbert has demonstrated through the case of Escuela Nueva, serving rural children in Colombia.

The lesson to be learned from current research and experience is to avoid all the old assumptions and stereotypes, and in each case to solidly base our policies and programmes on solid empirical evidence. We also should define education to include more than just school, also making use of other community

resources for learning. One of the most valuable of these can be properly structured and supervised work. School and children's work can, when well managed as part of a broader vision of education, be made not only compatible but even mutually reinforcing tools for learning. Educators need to wake up and accept the challenge.

CRC, political action and the social construction of childhood in Latin America

Francisco Pilotti
Chile, Organization of American States

A central challenge of the CRC is translating moral will into political action. An analysis of the history of the CRC in Latin America indicates that the CRC has served as a powerful advocacy tool: its strong moral message has underpinned the efforts to denounce the deplorable situation of children and has been the basis for mobilizing broad sectors of civil society in favor of children's rights. One of the most visible results of this effort has been the legal reform that has taken place in over a dozen countries, in order to upgrade domestic legislation according to CRC standards.

However, institutional and attitudinal change has proceeded at a far slower pace. To a great extent this responds to a lack of understanding and analysis of the contextual aspects of the CRC, both in terms of the ideological undercurrents that framed its drafting and the sociocultural context in which the CRC principles are to be applied. In many ways, the CRC in Latin America can be seen as the circulation of a text without a context.

Implementation of the CRC in Latin America has taken place in the context of rapid social, economic and political change. Changes in demography, strength of NGO, political structures (i.e. democracy) have greatly impacted on the possibilities for implementing the CRC. One cannot look at implementing the CRC devoid from the local reality. The presentation looked at the case of street children, and how changes in public opinion have affected government responses and policy changes. The tension between moral will and political action persists, Northern countries need to be careful not to be accused of moral imperialism. It is critical to pay attention to our reality. In order to advance in the contextual approach, social science research on the social construction of childhood can play an important role.

Gender-sensitive education for working children: Improving both access and quality

Mary Joy Pigozzi
USA, UNICEF

Its work in education has led UNICEF to redefine what it believes to be the concept of a quality education. The conventional definition of quality is not sufficient. This broader understanding includes acceptance of education as a right, recognition of the indivisibility of human rights, and acknowledgement of education as an arena in which human rights are honoured. In practical terms, there are five dimensions of quality about which we are concerned: what learners bring; content; processes; environments; and

outcomes. Each of these can be looked at from a gender perspective in relation to working children's **access to and achievement** in education.

Learners must be healthy, well-nourished, and ready to participate and learn, but opportunities for learning are not equal. Children born female are more likely to be discriminated against from the beginning. Girls often start working at a very early age.

In other cases, caregivers communicate from the earliest stages that they have different expectations of girls and boys, and that girls and boys have very different entitlements. And, increasingly, evidence is mounting on the relationship between expectations and performance in education.

Working children bring to the learning environment a wealth of "non-school" learning—some of it negative from "hard knocks", but much of it is positive, and can contribute to learning if it is recognized and valued. Unfortunately from the beginning, the playing field is not level. A commitment to quality requires that all children have the opportunity to take best advantage of learning opportunities.

Content is one of the more conventionally accepted elements of quality education. It is clear, however, that even this needs to be rethought somewhat because much of what is taught world-wide is no longer relevant to learners. In particular, it is the skills for life and the commitment to gender equality that can make a long-term difference with regard to the lifetime achievements of working children especially.

Quality educational **processes** require well-trained teachers able to use child-centred teaching and learning methods, and life skills approaches. But, the term "child-centred" must be reconstructed to address what children bring to the classroom, and issues of disparity and discrimination.

Evidence is mounting that the learning **environment** must also be considered part of educational quality. There must be adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities, and, if possible, health and nutrition services in the vicinity. Flexibility is emerging as essential for the education of children who have traditionally been excluded, especially working girls. Perhaps less well understood, but potentially most important as an obstacle to girls' participation and persistence in basic education, is the issue of safety and security in the learning environment

To determine if a quality education has been acquired it is essential that there be defined **learning outcomes** that are based on this new concept of quality and ways to assess them. Once the various aspects of quality have been identified, measurable indicators must be selected.

SPECIAL PANEL ON CULTURAL VALUES

CRC's provisions

Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo
Burkina Faso, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Three main points were made in the presentation:

1) One of the strengths of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the importance that it places on traditions and cultural values as it relates to human rights. Having said that, it is also recognized that some traditions go against human rights.

2) Some cultures are reluctant to promote the child's right to express his or her views. In reference to the African Charter, it emphasizes the child's duties and responsibilities vis a vis the parents.
3) In regard to education, it is important to build stronger bridges between the education the child receives at school and that at home, within his family and community. In order for this to take place, communities must be involved in the design of the education system. It is universally recognized that the child must be educated for peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, solidarity and liberty. These points are reflected in Article 29 (1) and also underlined in the Committees' general comments. Education must not only take into account a child's personality but also his or her cultural background. The participation of the child and the interaction between the child's cultural *milieu* is necessary to the child's harmonious development.

Education and multiculturalism

Judith Karp
Israel, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The subject matter was the potential conflict between the freedom of religion and the general principles of the convention as well as some particular rights of the child and the scope of state intervention in such cases. Such conflicts are significant in societies, which reflect strong deference to religion and ethnicity. Possible conflicts may arise especially where parents do not agree on the religious education of the child. This conflict is complicated by the need to review the rights of the child from an independent perspective, based on the child's evolving capacities.

The conflict between ultra orthodox education, which is not open to a secular curriculum, including human rights education, was also discussed from the stand point of the rights of the child to quality education, the right of the parents to decide on their child's education, identity and religious community and the interests of the state to respect multiculturalism, as against the state party obligation to implement the convention on the rights of the child in a holistic way.

Asian Values & Children's Rights

Victor Karunan
Southeast Asia, UNICEF

Child Rights in Asia needs to be viewed in the broader context of human rights and globalization in the region. Human rights are a sensitive topic in many countries- in others it is selectively applied. The fact that children have rights in Asia is relatively new. Young people are the 'critical generation' in Asia; they possess tremendous potential to influence change being the most effective advocates for children's rights. Future strategies must address their needs, tap into their potential and support their organisations for social change.

At the same time, however, future strategies must focus on family values and the cultural context to

effect positive change. Attitudes towards child rights are determined by prevailing local conceptions of childhood and child development – in the context of diversity and disparities. Need to identify and reinforce the positive values and practices towards children's participation–e.g. traditional socialization process for children and young people, attitudes towards family and elders, learning life skills, etc.

In order for children to be enabled and equipped to achieve their full human potential and enjoy the range of human rights there needs to be a 'radical shift' in the mid-set of adults, from a negative to a positive view of children. Education needs to become a priority for low-income countries and families. At the moment it is not the case. In conclusion, " Our present is not only handed down by our ancestors (that is history), but is leased from our children (which is a debt we owe them)".

Global support for the Indigenous child

Cynthia Price Cohen
USA, Child Rights International Research Institute

Indigenous Peoples have been especially recognized within the United Nations system for more than 25 years. According to UN statistics, there are an estimated 350 million indigenous people worldwide, living on every continent. They comprise about 5000 – 6000 distinct groups in over 70 countries, with a diverse range of culture, heritage, language, and numerous other characteristics. While there is no formal definition of "Indigenous Peoples," at minimum they can be generally characterised as having: 1) a common experience of colonialism and discrimination; 2) ties to the land and territories that pre-date colonialism; 3) a distinct culture; 4) a distinct language; 5) common customs, traditions and institutions; and 6) an organised government and system of laws.

The distinction between Indigenous Peoples and minorities is an important one that has been upheld by numerous international legal instruments, documents and bodies. Of particular significance is the fact this distinction is also made by article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which gives special recognition to the needs of the child "who is indigenous:"

The United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (Working Group) was established in 1982. Since that time, the Working Group has been a forum for Indigenous Peoples to discuss their common needs and interests. However, it was not until its Eighteenth Session in the summer of 2000, that the Working Group began to specifically examine the needs of Indigenous children.

There is no data that gives the exact number of Indigenous children, but it is estimated that there may be about 175 million. According to the UNICEF representative who spoke at the August 9, 2001 UN International Day of the World's Indigenous People, Indigenous children are at the bottom of every type of indicator. They are uniformly among the poorest people in every country and are subject to every type of exploitation and abuse. Yet, there are no formal studies or statistics which could help to define the status or needs of these children.

Preceding the Indigenous child/youth-focused Eighteenth Session of the Working Group; Child Rights International Research Institute organized the 1st International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth. Its purpose was to familiarize Indigenous Working Group participants with existing international child rights standards and initiatives and to acquaint representatives of United Nations bodies with the special needs of Indigenous children. The Workshop also provided a vehicle for Indigenous Peoples to voice some of their concerns about their children. Both at the Workshop and in the Working Group,

Indigenous representatives told of problems that included systematic discrimination and ranged from alcoholism, to substance abuse and suicide. One particularly important topic was the matter of education. Indigenous representatives indicated that they are struggling with the tensions between tradition and modernity. They are anxious for their young people to be fluent in their Indigenous languages and to participate in tribal practices, but they do not want them to lead marginalized lives, cut off from the dominant culture and technology. The challenge is to ensure that they learn about both cultures.

Because of the numerous international activities now taking place to support the rights of Indigenous Peoples, it is urgent for the Committee on the Rights of the Child to become actively involved in protecting the rights of Indigenous children – the Convention on the Rights of the Child makes this mandatory. However, in order to properly examine States Parties about their actions on behalf of Indigenous children, the Committee first needs to fully understand the situation of the Indigenous child. To date, there is almost no information available on this matter.

As we move toward the end of the United Nations Decade on Indigenous People in 2003, it is imperative for Indigenous children, individually and collectively, be accorded proper recognition as holders of treaty rights and human rights. It is also imperative for those in the international child rights community to become more familiar with the distinct characteristics of Indigenous Peoples, and to support them as they seek to ensure the holistic education of their children.

ALTERNATIVE FORMS AND MEANINGS OF EDUCATION

Tuesday 21 August

Why do we need a New School that respects human rights?

Vicky Colbert
Columbia, Back to the People Foundation

The *Escuela Nueva* system is a good example of a local innovation that became a highly effective national policy. It allowed Colombia to provide complete, quality primary education in areas where little or no educational opportunities existed before. Now one of the largest and longest running bottom-up educational innovations of the developing world, the *Escuela Nueva* concept has been so successful that educators from around the globe have travelled to Colombia to learn about it.

Eight important issues have to be highlighted from this Colombian experience:

1. It demonstrated that quantitative and qualitative improvement could be achieved in disadvantaged rural areas. It reached the most marginalized, hardest to reach.
2. It is one of the bottom-up innovations of the developing world that has survived the longest, despite the administrative and political weaknesses of the educational system in Colombia. It went to scale and reached approximately 20,000 schools in the late 80's.
3. Escuela Nueva, as an example of a "model breaking educational change" challenged the traditional, standard teacher-centred, frontal, model, and promoted active, child centred, participatory and co-operative learning. It also incorporated a new role of the teacher and impacted pedagogical practices and learning processes. It represented a fundamental

revisionning of the standard schooling model and an example of a shift from the transmission of knowledge to social construction of knowledge.

4. The multigrade situation forced the whole system to innovate, in teaching and learning methods, evaluation procedures, teacher training and textbook policies. Its main elements and strategies are also being introduced in monograde urban schools, in complete basic education up to the 9th grade.
5. Innovations like the student government and co-operative group learning have shown that democratic behaviour can be learned, prejudice reduced and conflicts can be resolved in a non-violent way. Skills, values and attitudes for active citizenship can be developed at school. For example, Guatemala, inspired in the Colombian model framework, has demonstrated that children in the Escuela Nueva Unitaria obtained better results in democratic behaviour than in traditional schools.
6. It has a model framework flexible enough to take into consideration cultural and social differences and has been adapted to countries as varied as Brazil, Guatemala, Panama, Chile, Uganda, Guyana, Nicaragua and the Philippines, among others.
7. Social Participation is a crosscutting dimension of all the components of the system and has contributed to the quality, sustainability and impact of the learning process. The real actors of change and of the reform were teachers, children and communities.
8. It proposed and put into practice more than 20 years ago the new views of thinking about education in the 21st century coming out of the specialised literature and meetings of education in L. America, such as the need of a cultural change to improve quality in Basic education in L. America and the need to promote a shift from transmission of knowledge to social construction of knowledge.

Escuela Nueva is an educational innovation for basic primary education in Colombia that integrates curricular, community, administrative and teacher training strategies in a systemic way. It was designed to make it possible to provide complete primary education and to improve the quality and effectiveness of the nation's rural schools, especially multigrade.

Essentially, it provides active, participatory and co-operative learning, a stronger relationship between the school and the community, and a flexible promotion mechanism adapted to the lifestyle of the rural child. Flexible promotion allows students to advance from one grade or level to another and complete academic units at their own pace.

The departure point of its conceptual and methodological proposal was that the changing "learning paradigm" of a "new school" and of an "open classroom" approach was needed in order to improve the effectiveness and quality of rural schools in impoverished conditions. As a result, it put into practice valid pedagogical principles of modern learning theory at school and classroom level and demonstrated that traditional, passive, memoristic, teacher-centred practices can be massively changed to a more child-centred, active, participatory, co-operative and personalized learning approach in schools.

A number of lessons can be drawn from the *Escuela Nueva* experience, the first being the importance of using a bottom-up approach that starts with the school as the unit of change. As a general point, when implementation has emphasised participation and community involvement, the innovation has been most likely to survive and develop.

Contemporary Context and Challenges

Ulf Fredriksson
Belgium, Education International

Education as we mainly know it was created in Europe and North America in 19th century. Mass-education replaced other forms of education which had existed earlier. Compared with earlier systems, state/governments/communities took a greater responsibility to organise education. There were several reasons for this approach: a democratisation of the society, increased focus on the training of the work force, social control, the changing role of the family and the building of the nation state. This model managed to provide primary education for all. Gradually, the system came to include secondary education.

In Africa, Asia and Latin America the colonial powers did not introduce mass education, only the education needed to provide a limited number of civil servants. The idea of mass education was introduced first after decolonialisation and was often very much influenced by educational models from the old colonial powers. From independence until the 1980's most countries could show a slow progress in school enrolment ratios. During the 1980's the curves in many countries started to point down. We have started to see some growth in enrolment figures again during the 90's, but it must still be noted that, according to UNESCO's estimates about 113 million children do not get any education at all.

In the educational debate today, many critical voices are heard. Education is seen as too expensive. The quality of the education systems is often described as too low. Education systems seem to have difficulties in finding an orientation in a multicultural surrounding. A series of ideas and proposals has been raised.

Education is discussed in terms of lifelong learning, which often includes new visions for adult education and vocational education and training. Reforms are seen in the areas of vocational education and training as well as in the area of early childhood education and care. Educational structures are decentralised. There is a growing push for privatization. Such movements may be supported by an increasing interest in the trade in services, including education. Such trends can be observed in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). There is also a growing belief in using new technologies in education. There is a discussion on how to control and measure quality in education.

The challenge today, if we wish to maintain a public education system intended for all, is to reform the education system. There are several crucial areas, which need to be discussed:

- How to improve the financing of education?
- What responsibilities do we all have to provide education for all?
- How to find the means to provide free quality education for all?
- How to improve quality?
- How to develop methods for evaluation and assessment which contribute to improving the quality of education and which give an influence on this process to teachers, parents and students?
- How can teacher education be improved? What curriculum reforms are needed?
- How to find a new balance for a partnership in education, recognising the rights of students, parents and teachers?
- How to find a role for education in a multicultural society?

Social movements in Brazil

Benedito Rodriques dos Santos
Brazil, National Movement of Street Boys and Girls

Social mobilization in Brazil has achieved amazing things but still has not changed the countries' wealth distribution. Corporations continue to rule the world. We know the solutions for the problems but have not been able to implement them on a large scale. More of us should devote our time in creating, forging political will. Need to put our wisdom into generating political will. We must talk about power to reinvent democracy, we have to change the power relations in society.

The Brazilian National Movement of Street Boys and Girls, created in 1985, is a deep grassroots movement that seeks to prepare children's to be citizens and participate in the making of democracy. The movement is a process, a good example of how society can create a social space to reinvent democracy.

Its goals have been in the area of advocacy, empowerment and training of street educators. We do not teach children, but learn together. It is by adults and children working together that we can be the generators of a new society. In the process, children learn to become advocates for them.

Children's Rights in Canada

Sandra Griffin
Canada, Canadian Child Care Federation and Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.

Young people can play important roles in promoting, protecting, and advocating for children's rights, but first they need to have meaningful opportunities to learn about their rights and to experience them. As well, those practitioners working with children and youth are essential models and mentors for promoting children's rights and for supporting rights-respecting environments for children and youth. This approach to education is in accordance with Article 28 and 29 of the CRC, and Article 42 that concerns disseminating information on the treaty to children and adults alike.

The purpose is to foster a culture of peace within an educational context — one where children and youth can live and grow with "peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality, and solidarity," as stated in the CRC preamble.

The presentation provided examples of curriculum materials developed in Canada including educational programs developed and implemented within British Columbia, Alberta and Nova Scotia. These programs proceeded on an understanding that the curriculum can be a powerful vehicle through which children's rights can be learned and experienced within education systems — primary through secondary levels — and studied within the post-secondary education sectors. In addition, children's rights education is a powerful tool for moral education, for promoting inter-racial harmony and positive interpersonal relations. Interesting Canadian initiatives include:

- The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture has incorporated children's rights education into their primary - grade 8 curricula based on demonstration of its impact on promoting tolerance and acceptance of minorities and improved classroom functioning. In addition, the University College of Cape Breton teaches undergraduate courses in children's rights.

- In British Columbia, a third-year Distance Education university course, *Giving Voice - Children's Rights Come Alive*, was developed by the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, with the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of Children, and UNICEF-Canada. The Greater Victoria School District #61 undertook a collaborative initiative in developing a *Family Education Program on the CRC*. This offers family-oriented workshops which serve to increase public awareness of CRC, and to expand its use in child and youth advocacy at the community level.
- *The World Around Us* curriculum for children's rights education, which has been implemented within the Greater Victoria School District #61 since April 1996, with expansion into selected schools within the Calgary Board of Education since September 1999. This literature-based curriculum aims to promote children's growth toward responsible citizenship, within an educational context; it provides Primary students with opportunities for exploring themes relating to respect, rights, and responsibilities.

Formal education: Making school friendlier to working children

Terezinha Nunes
Brazil, Oxford Brookes University

Many children who work are at risk for school failure. One possible explanation for why working children are at risk for school failure is the tension between two worlds of knowledge, school knowledge and knowledge developed outside school. This explanation is based on an analysis of how higher mental activities are carried out, how children learn outside the classroom, what they learn, and how this knowledge is used in school.

According to Vygotsky, all higher mental activities are carried out by functional systems that involve a constant task performed by variable mechanisms and leading to an invariant result. The variable mechanisms are typically mediated by cultural tools, which can differ across situations and activities. This means that the same person might be successful in solving problems using one tool but not another. Problem solving in mathematics, for example, may require calculations that are carried out orally, using a written algorithm, or using a calculator. Research has shown that Brazilian working youngsters, who are engaged in the informal economy, are excellent in their use of oral approaches to calculation but might fail drastically when asked to solve problems that involve the same calculations through the application of a written algorithm. Careful analyses of the youngsters reasoning also showed that they used in their oral calculation the same reasoning principles that were implicit in the school taught algorithms. In spite of this, the written methods do not seem to make much sense to many of the working youngsters. Schools unwittingly discriminate against these youngsters as they require that problems be solved using a particular tool, written algorithms. The youngsters' knowledge developed outside school remains invisible in school.

A second aspect to be considered is how children learn. To exemplify this issue, it is illustrative to consider the case of deaf children. Deaf children are at risk for school failure. This may be largely related to the fact that schools are language driven environments: teaching is carried out mostly through talk and written materials. Deaf children have a preference for learning visually as the sounds of language and their representation on paper are not the easiest materials for them to access. Research has shown

that deaf children can make considerable progress in mathematics if instructed through visual means.

A final aspect to be considered is that children's self-perception as learners is developed in school, under the influence of the teacher's and peers' perception of them. This perception influences the outcome of learning in the classroom. Teachers' social representations of their students' intelligence appears to be built on the students' oral (vocabulary) and written skills. Children who show specific reading difficulties but are of normal intelligence are perceived by the teacher – and also perceive themselves – as less intelligent than the peers. These perceptions are difficult to change and likely to influence youngsters' success in school and likelihood to stay on in school after compulsory education.

In conclusion, in order to make schools into friendlier environments for working in children, we have to ensure that children's knowledge acquired outside school is recognised and valued, that their ways of learning are considered when we design teaching programmes, and that the biases we may have in our conception of intelligence are not biased in favour of children from more privileged environments and do not discriminate against children with less exposure to an academic vocabulary and to reading in their own home.

Importance of the early years

Martha Farrell Erickson
USA, University of Minnesota

The recognition that education begins at birth has huge implications for Article 29. Some of the critical elements of early education include the social-emotional foundation of a secure attachment with at least one sensitive, responsive caregiver; opportunities to explore safely; a rich language environment; and appropriate cognitive stimulation. We know from a wealth of research that differences in early experience account for wide differences in later educational outcomes. We need to speak out for people to recognize that early education (birth to five) is as important as higher education. We need to work together with the entire education system to be sure children's educational needs are met from birth to adulthood.

To be sure children have the experiences they need in early childhood, it is necessary to educate and support parents and other caregivers. One of the most important areas to address is a baby's need to establish a trusting relationship with parents (and possibly other caregivers). Longitudinal research demonstrates how the quality of early attachments lay the foundation for later learning. In particular, a child with a secure attachment with a sensitive parent is, at later ages, more confident, motivated, caring and connected with others. In contrast, a child who does not receive sensitive, responsive care develops one of several types of insecure attachment. Depending on the specific pattern of care a child receives, he or she may become overly dependent and reluctant to learn; hostile and avoidant of others; or at high risk for significant psychopathology.

There are effective models for educating and supporting parents, helping them learn to understand and respond sensitively to their baby's nonverbal "language" (i.e. cues and signals). One innovative approach is "Seeing Is Believing," in which parents are video-taped with their babies and then engaged in viewing the tape in order to figure out what their baby is telling them. This process of self-observation helps parents build on their own strengths and competence.

When children do not get the kind of care and stimulation they need at home, a good quality relationship with another caregiver can help compensate and can improve the odds for good development and learning later on. However, this requires continuity of care. The reality is that turnover in childcare is extraordinarily high in many places, attributable largely to low wages and lack of benefits.

To ensure a child's right to an education from the beginning of life, we need to consider the following questions:

- What factors support or hinder families from meeting the needs of their young children?
- What are effective strategies for building the capacities of families to provide appropriate care and stimulation?
- What are the options for infants and young children who do not get the experiences they need at home?
- What needs to happen to maximize those options?

SPECIAL PANEL ON EDUCATION, THE MEDIA, AND THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICIATIONS REVOLUTION

UNICEF and the internet

Andres Guerrero
Chile, UNICEF

UNICEF uses the media in very diverse ways. Radio, for instance, has been a popular medium to reach the goals of *Education for All*. More recently, the internet has been used to enhance existing programs. This new technology is considered to have much potential for education.

How can young people acquire the skills and attitudes to become active agents of social change? How can education help develop values such as peace, tolerance, justice which will in turn allow them to mobilize and advocate for human rights.

A website that allows student to explore global issues of development as well as responding to them has been considered valuable. The later point is important, reflecting the idea that child participation is about 'doing things' rather than just analyzing and exploring the issue etc. In our attempt to respond to these changes UNICEF set-up a website called *Voices of Youth* in 1994. The idea was to use the new technology to bring voices of youth to policy-makers. A website has also been established for teachers. There are again three components to the website: learning, responding and taking action. Engaging teachers in activities provides opportunities to create a community of common interest through virtual connection, to promote analysis and action.

Still the question remains ongoing: how to construct a website, its architecture in a way that favours interactivity and challenges the digital divide?

Information Management as Development: examining the value of ICTs in the child rights community

Andrea Khan
England, CRIN

Organisations such as UNDP, the World Bank and the G8 are now calling for a partnership between development and technology. They urge that 'the potential benefits of technology are rooted in a pro-poor development strategy' (UNDP Human Development Report 2001: *Making New Technologies Work for Human Development*). Yet there are concerns that globalisation and market forces may have negative consequences for development and related sectors such as health and education.

Rapid advances in information and communications technology (ICTs) since the early 1990s have brought many advances to practitioners who work for children. This includes progress in research and development to eliminate and combat childhood diseases; more innovative distance education programmes; and improvements in networking and knowledge sharing.

An analysis of the actual use of technology by CRIN members shows that a digital divide exists between organisations in the North – the 'information rich' — and in the South — the 'information poor'. Second, the potential of technology is not being fully explored in the child rights community.

At the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), consultation with members in the network (which now numbers over 1,200 organisations around the world), suggests that Southern-based organisations still rely heavily on 'hard-copy' documentation to keep them abreast on developments (1999). The CRIN Newsletter was identified as a very important source of information. The majority regarded it as the only source of information about CRIN, child rights, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that reached smaller NGOs in the South that do not have internet access or email.

CRIN members experience common problems with ICTs. This includes: (1) information overload, (2) information scarcity, (3) lack of technical expertise to develop ICT systems, (4) lack of resources to develop ICT systems, (5) lack of resources to develop research, documentation and other information products.

These findings are consistent with the market for ICTs, which is in the declining phase in the North and in the developing phase in the South. Access and use of Internet, email, and fax are well developed in the North, and under developed in the South. In northern countries such as the USA, Canada, Finland, Sweden, and the UK, internet and email are affordable and often subsidised. Yet in the South, Internet and email are cost prohibitive, resulting in a preference for face-to-face meetings, workshops, mail, fax and radio.

Ongoing research with Leeds Metropolitan University's School of Information Management is now looking further into these issues in order to provide a model of information management for other human rights organisations. Our hypotheses include the following:

- The child rights community is in the first phase or the standard setting phase in terms of child rights practices. The second phase would see it move into the phase of implementation and monitoring; and when related to information management that would include documentation of best practices. Related to this, within the child rights community the issue of violations of the human rights of the child could receive greater attention.

- That sharing of information generally aims to increase awareness of child rights, rather than enabling interactivity and empowerment that is needed to sustain a global movement for children.
- That documentation on child rights tends to be available more readily in English, than in French, Spanish or other UN languages. This is also the case with the Internet.
- That information shared in the global child rights community tends to have more significance at the international level. Nationally relevant information about the rights of the child is less prominent and/or less forthcoming, as is community-based information.
- That information tends to be managed centrally both by networks, coalitions and by international NGOs and United Nation agencies.

Effectively using the media

Christopher Lowry
Canada, Medecins Sans Frontieres

In 1996 there was a meeting of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, chaired by Thomas Hammerberg, focusing on the child and the media. It looked at child participation, harmful media, and how to improve the image of the child in the media. What was interesting about it in retrospect was that there was no reference to increasing the output of effective media to inform, inspire and empower children and youth as change agents for social and ecological justice. So we need to reflect on the question: What would that look like?

The presentation reviewed and critiqued some examples of media that promotes child rights such as the Meena and Sara animation series from UNICEF, Rights from the Heart series from the National Film Board of Canada, the websites of UNICEF, Warchild Canada, and also governmental actors such as CIDA. All of these examples have value but we must recognize that none of them is really designed and distributed in such a way that they can reach the vast majority of children in adversity in the world.

More effective in reaching children at the grassroots are local community radio initiatives in many countries, including programs for kids and by kids. Popular TV programs and films like the ones produced by Media for Development in Zimbabwe and Common Ground Productions out of Washington are excellent examples of what is called "intended outcome media" which involved children in the creative process.

We can introduce the Convention to children and adults without making expensive, clever media to illustrate what the rights are. Child rights are quite easy to understand, but they strike adults as ideals that are unrealistic; even if they have no cultural objection to child rights they see our failure to protect and enforce these rights as part of the normal

injustice of life, the way things are, the normal suffering of those who have no power.

Many pundits in the west warn against exposing children to films that depict violence and negative role models. However, children everywhere, especially in adversity, are exposed to media beyond our control. We need to be able to work with the stories that they are interested in. Any story, including Rambo, can be a learning story, a point of reference to talk about values, options and choices.

Development agencies must provide some diversity and alternatives to the regular third world diet of Hollywood and Bombay product? If we want to bring the Convention to life we need to:

1. invest in popular media that incarnates and dramatizes child rights, and
2. our health workers and educators at the grassroots need to lose their fear of popular culture and use it as a vehicle to talk to children about their rights.

Child Rights Education-International

Stuart Hart
USA, Child Rights Education International and ICRD

The need to educate professionals and policy leaders about children's rights has become quite clear. Persons in positions that influence the rights, development and quality of life of children must be made aware of the relevance of children's rights to their work. The Child Rights Caucus, composed of over 100 international and national child oriented NGOs, included the following relevant supportive statement in "A World Fit for Children: Alternative NGO Text" which it prepared for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, June 13, 2001 edition.

"People who work directly with children have great responsibilities. It is important to enhance their status, morale and professionalism. *Professionals and policy makers influencing the lives of children (e.g. pediatricians, teachers, psychologists, school counsellors, lawyers, child protective services specialists, social workers, police, architects) should receive training and support to understand and appreciate child rights principles and standards and apply them in their work.* (29.10)

The provision of education at every level and in virtually every area is presently going through major transformations as a result of the electronic communication revolution. Child rights education for key professional and policy leader groups should take advantage of these developments and incorporate distance learning technology and systems. By so doing, it will be possible to bring a coherent body of knowledge and expert opinion, rigorously constructed and reviewed for validity and applicability, to every corner of world in a variety of formats and languages. Such a system of international education can be used for pre-service or continuing service education in a variety of modular configurations or integrated in an existing local or national program, with opportunities, encouragement and guidance to provide connections, extensions or overlays to assure cultural and temporal fit.

Child Rights Education-International is an international distance-learning project specifically developed to serve these purposes. It has been created to make the highest levels of knowledge, expertise, and critical thinking available to interested persons, organizations and institutions throughout the world to help them understand and promote the human rights of the child. The project has a steering committee of internationally respected experts in children's rights and has as its primary bases the Institute for Child Rights and Development (University of Victoria, Canada), the Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of the Child (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, USA) and the Centre for Child Rights (University of Ghent, Belgium). The project can be reached through its website (www.childrightseducation.org).

Child Rights Education-International is intended to produce a comprehensive international program of children's rights education, through distance learning, which will:

- be a primary international system, resource and model for children's rights education;
- support development of competencies necessary to achieve effective and responsible children's rights research /scholarship, education, advocacy, policies, services, and practices within and across disciplines and nations;
- serve as the catalyst and coordinator for public discourse to advance understanding and thinking on children's rights issues;
- provide organization and management of expandable and accessible archival holdings on children's rights history, issues, research, standards, and practices;
- provide an international base of information, expertise and education to interface with, complement and serve national efforts to understand and advance children's rights; and
- make maximum use of the existing developing communication technology of distance and distribution education, including interactive television via satellite and/or telephone link, internet web sites, digitalized video recordings, CD ROM, email, telefax, and radio.

Child Rights Education-International is presently negotiating a partnership among major professional associations of education, school and child psychology, child and family law, pediatrics, child protection, and child development to cooperatively design, construct, field test, and manage access to pre-service and continuing professional service child rights distance learning programs. Preliminary discussions have been quite promising. The project is being designed to include both a base of foundational modules for use by all professions and policy makers and modular streams of advanced education specific to the needs of each major professional and policy area. It is expected that pilot work with these programs will begin in 2002.

STREAMS

I. HUMAN RIGHTS RESPECTING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- Facilitator: Stuart Hart (Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of the Child, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and Institute for Child Rights and Development, University of Victoria)
- Rapporteur: Cynthia Price Cohen (ChildRights Research Institute, New York)
- Core Resource Team: Ulf Fredriksson (Education International, Belgium), Andres Guerrero (UNICEF, New York), and Firmin Matoko (UNESCO, Paris)

Nature and Purposes of Stream Group:

The Human Rights Respecting Learning Communities Stream worked to better understand CRC Article 29, its history, and particularly its potential for full implementation respecting the spirit of the CRC, the wide variety of cultural contexts it is to serve, and the relevance of the child's development and evolving capacities. This guiding purpose and the human and document resources available to the stream group were applied develop statements of clarification and recommendation to promote future advances in implementing article 29. The title for the Stream Group was intended to underline recognition that child learning and development will be best served in learning communities where the human rights of all participants are respected in traditional schools or alternative schools, and in their communities.

Stream Group Resources:

The *major documents* used by the Stream Group were the CRC; CRC article 29 & 28; the General Comment for article 29 adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/GC/2001/1,CRC, General comment 1, 17 April 2001); "A World Fit for Children: Alternative NGO Text" prepared by the Child Rights Caucus for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children (June 13, 2001 edition); and models proposed for implementing article 29, including the "Respectful Learning Communities" project (Bennett & Hart, 2001); the "Framework for Rights-Based, Child-Friendly Schools" UNICEF model (Shaeffer, 2000); and "A School for Children with Rights" (Hammarberg, 1997).

The *human resources* available to the Stream Group were extensive in number and quality. Conference attendees participating in the Stream Group ranged from approximately 40 to 80 during its numerous sessions (4 half days). The Stream Group also had the advantage of the regular availability of the following cadre of experts: Malin Elisson (Radda Barnen, Sweden), Ulf Fredriksson (Education International), Andres Guerrero (UNICEF), Nathan Shubert-Harbison (The Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, Victoria, BC), Adam Jones (The Queen Alexandra Youth Advisory Council, Victoria, BC), Andrea Khan (Child Rights Information Network - CRIN), Firmin Matoko (UNESCO), Duncan Wilson (Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Sweden), Suzanne Williams (Youth Millennium Project, Canada), David Wosk (University of Victoria). Additionally, the following experts were available to present or offer perspectives: (Vicky Colbert (Back to the People Foundation, Columbia), Jeff Goldhagen (American Academy of Pediatrics, USA), Roger Hart (CUNY, New York), Sandra Griffin (Canadian Child Care Federation), Rochelle Johnston (Save the Children Canada),

Gertrude Lenzer (Children's Studies Program, City University of New York), Judith Karp (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Israel), Victor Karunan (UNICEF, Southeast Asia), John Kydd (International Society for the Prevention of child Abuse and Neglect), Anjana Mangalagirl (UNICEF, Beijing, China), Vitit Muntarbhorn (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok), Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Burkino Faso), Benedito Rodriques (University of Goias and National Movement for Street Boys and Girls), and Eugeen Verhellen (Children's Rights Centre, University of Ghent, Belgium)

Formal presentations were provided on the following topics by the identified experts:

- "The Swedish Experience with Article 29" (Malin Elisson)
- "Education for Democracy and Development" (Eugeen Verhellen)
- "Article 29's Implications" (Victor Karunan)
- "An Interdisciplinary University Program of Children's Studies" (Gertrud Lenzer)
- "Article 29 and the Fifth 'P' – Play" (John Kydd)
- "Preparation of Professionals to Implement the CRC" (Jeff Goldhagen)

Article 29 and its General Comment:

Article 29 was discussed at length during the work of the Stream Group. The following were among the points of significance noted in its regard. It is the CRC's central and guiding statement of respect for the child's potential and of commitment to assuring the child's full and healthy development and functioning in ways serving the child and broader society. Article 29 expects education to promote the full development of the child in every area of physical and mental potential; to develop respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, for parents, for one's own culture and the culture of others, and for the natural environment; and to prepare the child for a responsible life in a free society, emphasizing democratic processes, peace, and free of prejudiced-based discrimination. In short, it embodies the elements of Piaget's superordinate goal for education — autonomy — inferring full development of independence, social responsibility, and self-actualization. Article 29's far-reaching aspirations, setting expectations beyond present conditions in any existing nation, demand at least minimum support for and from the other articles of the CRC. In this sense it is the CRC's clearest single statement of the best interests of the child.

Article 29's significance is further underlined by the fact that it was the first article of the CRC to be selected by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for the development of a General Comment (CRC/GC/2001/1,CRC, General comment 1, 17 April 2001), a formalized guide to meanings and implementations. The General Comment (GC) was discussed at length and was available to the participants in full text and an abstracted form (developed by the facilitator), both of which can be found at www.childrightseducation.org. As a constitutive instrument, art. 29 GC uses very vague terms – but these must be interpreted in a very general way. Comment goes beyond the language of the article to interpret it in a way that is holistic. The last part of the GC has recommendations at ten. It creates a short cut. Instead of asking detailed questions about government action, the GC will be like an extra guideline, especially for periodic reports. Every country should set up a process to make sure that its leaders and citizens are familiar with the requirements of article 29. Judith Karp (Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child) requested that the Stream Group identify important characteristics of and desired improvements for the article 29 GC to be considered in further education about the GC and for the development of future GCs. The following points were raised.

- An "Executive Summary" is needed
- Religion/spirituality in education require further guidance
- Values inclusions and implications in education/assessment should be further clarified
- Definition of education requires quality indicators
- Role of culture should be clarified/emphasized in defining education
- Education should employ a balanced approach in respecting the language and culture of origin for a child and the languages and cultures providing future advantages to the child
- Need for clarification in art. 29 GC pt. 2: "Education goes far beyond ..." and related accountability
- Human rights must be given strong emphasis in education
- Learning human rights by example must be incorporated in education
- Provisions on plan of action, including the absence if specific time limits, are weak
- Role of UN agencies in art. 29 GC pts. 27/28 should identify/include specific agencies
- Include early child care and development along with school/child development within education
- Need more emphasis on extra-curricular activities and training for citizenship
- Indivisibility of rights in art. 29 should be made clearer
- Breakthrough opportunities exist in art. 29 to promote sustainable development
- History of past international agreements on education is depressing
- Art. 29 is too school- centric, it should include "learning environments"
- Art. 29 GC pt. 8 tends to exploited by preservers of traditional religions

Conceptual-Structural Supports

The following elements were recommended (by Vitit Muntarbhorn and Eugeen Verhellen) and accepted by the assembly to provide a framework for implementing all articles of the CRC.

- Relevant laws
- Policies
- Effective programs
- Complaint mechanisms
- Resources (finances/goodwill)
- Information dissemination
- Cooperation
- Data
- Accountability

Priorities Among Goal Areas for Education:

Sixteen points of emphasis were selected from art. 29 GC for consideration by participants as to the relative priority they should be given in working toward implementation of the article. Persons were asked to identify their top 5 choices. The results are presented below, with the item receiving the most

support given first and on through to the item receiving the least support (not meaning it is unimportant but indicating its relative position of importance among the 16 according to participants).

- Relevance & Life Skills
- Alternative & Informal Education
- Involvement & Engagement in Community
- Child as a Person with Rights
- Full Development of Unique Personality
- Human Rights Education
- Holistic Development (including spiritual values)
- Economics of Education
- Pre-and Early School Education
- Non-Discrimination/Inclusion
- Adolescent Education
- Excluded Children
- Partners for Cooperation in Providing Education
- Work and Education
- Monitoring and Reporting
- Children in Conflict

Selected Priorities: Necessary Components-Considerations for Implementation:

Eight educational priority areas were identified as deserving particular attention in working toward achievement of the spirit and standards of art. 29. Two of these areas were judged to have been dealt with so well during the Plenary Sessions of the Conference that it would be sufficient to accept the plenary material and recommendations for the purposes of a report. These two areas were:

1. *Community Engagement and Involvement* (Strong acceptance and encouragement were expressed for implementation of a "School Community" or "Learning Community" concept. This orientation would promote a framework by which learning and living human rights and full personality development would occur through coordinated school community relations, eliminating or making highly permeable the boundaries and between school and community with assuring relevant learning supports across and within both. The goals, work, needs, and potentials of formal learning environments and the community would be integrated wherever beneficial.
2. *Rethinking, Restructuring, Reforms* (Strong support was given to the need to explore alternative frameworks, systems and venues for education; while recognizing the dangers posed by some of the informal or alternative school programs that destructively split society and are not accountable. Education that is accountable to the people – to society - should be available in forms that engage children who are disenfranchised, who must work to survive, who live in difficult circumstances, and who are distant in time and space from traditional educational supports. Home schooling was recognized as a solution for some, not "the" solution.)

Six priority areas were further explored to identify components or considerations that would be necessary to guide and achieve implementation, producing the following results.

1. *Right to a Rights-Based Education* (achieving the spirit of Article 29)

   A rights based approach should be supported through:

   - Content and full participatory process (gender-equal, self-directed and experiential, self and school-based evaluation)
   - Learning and living environment (e.g., inclusiveness, safety, guided participation)
   - Viable learning outcomes (tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness, critical thinking & comprehension – broadly defined literacy, egalitarian beliefs)
   - Quality assurances (research, monitoring, dissemination)

2. *Child Rights Respecting Mindset*

   A child rights foundational mindset requires appreciation of and support for:

   - Child development, knowledge and understanding
   - Child competency and contributions (individualized creativity, unique and collective)
   - Human needs
   - Win-win consequences of respect for child rights for all generations and society
   - Bottom-up/top-down strategies
   - Partnerships/ cooperation with influencing (youth, churches,) organizations etc.

3. *Preparation of the Family Services Community, Educators, Other Professionals & Policy Makers*

   The following conditions and supports should be available:

   - Pre-service and continuing education for all relevant professionals
   - Knowledge, attitudes, advocacy, and best practices preparation/education
   - "World Fit for Children" document for UNGASS supportive statement inclusion
   - Provision through partnerships respecting needs and gaps and strengths (international, national, grassroots.)
   - Achieve coordinated mutual support across professions
   - Action research on status and needs
   - Focus on topic in next conference(s)

4. *Full – Holistic Development of Unique and Shared Potentials*

   To understand and work toward this goal requires application of:

   - Art. 29 and General Comment as conceptual-structural guide
   - General principles and full CRC
   - Learning community that contributes to child holistic development
   - Psychological (cognitive, affective and volitional), physical, social, and spiritual components
   - Knowledge, competency, values, behavior development goals and supports
   - Culturally respectful human environments

- Democratic citizenship – learned and experienced as a way of life

5. *Life-skills– Child Relevant (now and future) Education*

   Will include or respect the following principles or imperatives:

   - Based on human needs and potentials in relation to both the child and society
   - Content to include basic human values, choices and applications
   - Assures interactive content and practical applications (now and later)
   - Emphasizes community engagement — involvement – interaction – integration and intergenerational relations
   - Assures child participation in choosing, constructing and evaluating goals, content, environments, processes and practices
   - Promotes social connectedness, efficacy and autonomy
   - Incorporates, meaningful work
   - Learning environments promote the best interests of the child

6. *Human Rights Education*

   Will be best achieved with the following supports:

   - Societal-community prerequisite conditions (e.g. safety, nutrition, respect, opportunity)
   - Inclusion of learning and living human rights in and through education (learning about, valuing, living and promoting)
   - Article 29 operationalized
   - Plan of Action required by General Comment should include a deadline for Human Rights Education
   - Human rights recognition as the non-negotiable core of rights-based education

References (in addition to those available to all Conference Participants):

Bennett, J., & Hart, S. N. (2001). Respectful school communities. In S. N. Hart, C. P. Cohen, M. F. Erickson, & M. Flekkoy (Eds.) *Children's rights in education* (pages 191-216). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Elison, M., & Vahamaki, J. (2001). *Report of the Swedish example: A seminar on General Comment on 29 (1)*. Stockholm, Sweden: Radda Barnen.

Hammarberg, T. (1997). *A school for children with rights*. Florence, Italy: Innocenti Centre, UNICEF.

Shaeffer, S. (2000). *A framework for rights-based, child-friendly schools*. New York: UNICEF.

II. CHILDREN AFFECTED BY WAR

- Facilitator: Philip Cook (Institute for Child Rights and Development Canada); Kathy Vandergrift (World Vision Canada)
- Rapporteur: Kathy Vandergrift (World Vision Canada); Martha Nelems (CIDA)
- Core Resource Team: Rita Sikhondze (Youth Activist Swaziland)

Stream Group Resources:

Conference attendees participating in the Stream Group ranged from approximately 20 to 25 during its numerous sessions (4 half days). The Stream Group had the advantage of the regular availability of the following cadre of experts: Saulaima Abyu El Haj (ECRD, Jerusalem); Foday Sawi Lahai (World Vision, Sierra Leone); Aoife Gibbons (CIDA); Guillermo Monroy (Guatemala); James Fraser (Medecins Sans Frontieres); Jo-Ann Stoltz (UVIC); Phylis Scott (Canadian Federation of University Women); Michele Cook (ICRD).

Formal presentations were provided on the following topics by the identified experts:

- Culturally grounded models addressing education for children affected by war (Guillermo Monroy (Pastoral Social de Guatemala); Foday Sawi-Lahai (World Vision Sierra Leone)
- Creating a culture of peace: Communication and children's rights (Christopher Lowry (Medecins Sans Fontieres Canada); James Fraser (Medecins Sans Fontieres Canada)
- Priorities, models, strategies and recommendations for implementing the CRC with respect to education and children affected by armed conflict (Philip Cook (ICRD) and Katherine Vandergrift (World Vision Canada)

Conceptual structural supports:

- Throughout the discussion we identified a cluster of rights which especially apply for education and children before, during, or after armed conflict. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was used as the framework for analysis.

Paragraph 12: participation

Paragraph 8: social identity

Paragraph 22: family reunification, right to family

Paragraph 29: aims of education

Paragraph 38 and 39: right to assistance and rehabilitation

- Education must be an essential component of emergency response. It provides continuity, stability, and hope in the context of armed conflict. The right to assistance and the inclusion of education as the fourth pillar of humanitarian assistance are important advocacy points for inclusion in the Outcome Document of the UN Special Session for Children. The group suggests that people contact their country delegations to emphasize these points before the meeting in September.

Discussion on the kind of education needed for children in armed conflict situations:

a. A rights-based approach is very different from traditional concepts of education.

b. Core concept: provide learning opportunities for children and youth that respond to their

priorities and build on their gifts and strengths for social, economic, and ecological regeneration of their communities and for their individual futures.

c. Key components of a rights-based understanding of education in emergencies:
   - broadest possible scope, including formal, informal, and nonformal education;
   - includes the community, opportunities for parents to learn about child rights, and both adults and children as learners and teachers;
   - recognition that children are learning continuously, even in conflict
   - map the ways children are learning negatively and positively and support the healthy learning opportunities;
   - child-centered;
   - social ecological approach, with the child as an active participant;
   - build on the resiliency of children;
   - opportunity for belonging, social identity, and building resistance to drugs and abusive relationships;
   - gender specific components. Examples: disaggregated data and differentiations in messages and strategies for peace-building;
   - attention to children with disabilities, including land-mine victims;
   - principles of the CRC apply to staff culture as well in agencies and communities

d. A presentation from Guatemala identified three core concepts and questions for work with children impacted by war in that situation:
   - resiliency : How is the child coping and how can that be reinforced?
   - spirituality: What spiritual resources can the child draw on?
   - restoration of joy: What provides hope for the future?

Implications of a rights-based approach to education in armed conflict:

- Recognize the transformative nature of conflict. The child is no longer the same; changes may be positive or negative. The community is not the same. It is not possible to return to pre-conflict context.
- All initiatives must respect the agency of children as meaning-makers in all forms of culture, including the media.
- Learning will include avenues that implement the right of children to participate actively in building historical memory for the goal of truth, peace, reconciliation, and social justice.
- Rights-based learning should be promoted in all three stages: pre-conflict, during conflict, and after conflict.
- In each stage the components of prevention, protection, and regeneration will be present, in different combinations, depending also on specific circumstances.
- Rights-based learning builds on the normalizing nature of education and contributes to a culture of peace.

Recommendations:

1. Everyone can encourage their own country to ratify the optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
   - Advocate for education as an essential component of emergency assistance, with as little interruption in learning opportunities as possible. Contact country delegations to the UN Special Session on Children to support strong statements about the right to assistance and the inclusion of education in emergency assistance, including consolidated fund appeals.
   - Funded learning opportunities should reflect a rights-based approach.
   - Persuade states to expand training for military and police forces in child rights.
   - Improve co-ordination between NGOs in emergencies.
   - Support staff and provide time and space for restoring the well-being of staff.
   - Strengthen regional mechanisms to protect child rights, including the right to education.
2. Areas for further research and reflection in the child rights community.
   - Explore the difference and similarities in rights-based learning for conflict situations, working children, street children, and other vulnerable groups.
3. Explore the differences and similarities of different conflict situations, such as occupied territories, victims of terrorism, impacts of sanctions, and suicide bombings.
4. Explore the potential of the CRC as a framework for conflict prevention and conflict resolution, including the following factors:
   - rights awareness reduces likelihood of forced recruitment
   - the CRC as a framework to resolve conflicts between rights calls for child-centered public policy as conflict prevention
   - legal system improvements for child protection as conflict prevention
5. Develop a better understanding of the intersection of the CRC provisions for the right to religion and the aims of education.

III. CHILD LABOUR STREAM

Learning, livelihoods and children's rights. Establishing Learning Opportunities that Recognise Children's Current Realities & Offering Options

- Facilitators: Bill Myers
- Rapporteur: Gerison Lansdown

Stream Group Resources:

Formal Presentations were provided on the following topics by the identified experts:

- What UNICEF is learning from its research and experience about how education can (and cannot) be used to help protect children from detrimental work and working conditions in violation of CRC Article 32, paragraph 1. (Mary Joy Pigozzi (UNICEF, New York)).
- The role of education in implementing the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (no. 182). (Susan Gunn (ILO-IPEC, Geneva).
- What Save the Children Alliance has learned about what educational approaches can (and cannot) protect children against detrimental work and working conditions. (Marlene Mondaca (Save the Children, Canada).
- Lessons from Bangladesh and their implications for education and child labour policy. (Susan Bissell (University of Melbourne, Australia))
- Re-visioning education: lessons from experience with working children in Karnataka. (Nandana Reddy (Concerned for Working Children, India)).
- Improving classroom processes: Recognizing and building on the competencies of working children. Terezinha Nunes (Brookes University, U.K.).
- Improving school systems to reach working children. Vicky Colbert (Volvamos, Colombia).
- Considering earn-and-learn strategies: What we can learn from experience in Zimbabwe. Michael Bourdillon (University of Zimbabwe).
- Considering vocational education strategies: What we can learn form experience in Bangladesh. Dr. M.B. Zaman (UCEP, Bangladesh).

Topic question: "In what ways, under what conditions, to what extent, and through what approaches and methods can education best help to protect children against at least the worst forms of child labour? What works and what does not work?

Topic question: "How can international child rights standards be reconciled with cultural diversity and economic realities in relating education and child work?" Topic Question: "How can education be improved to better serve working children?" Group work in drafting recommendations for future implementation of the CRC in respect to education and child labour, with special attention to Article 29 and recommendations in the outcome document ("A World Fit for Children") of the U.N. Special Session on Children.

Observations:

1. The issues facing children engaged in child labour are highly complex. There is a need for multi-sectoral responses. It is not possible to remove the barriers to education without

bringing together social, economic, legal, commercial and cultural dimensions. Addressing education in isolation will not eliminate child labour nor provide opportunities for all children to access education. Furthermore, many interventions, however well-intended can have adverse consequences for children, if not considered in the context of these complexities.

2. It is important not to equate the rejection of schooling with the rejection of learning. We need to acknowledge children's experience of schooling as authoritarian, with irrelevant curriculum, inadequate teaching, humiliating practices and abusive treatment.
3. Children bring a diversity of experience and history into school – ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, as well as factors such as culture, poverty, work, social responsibility etc. These experiences add value and offer potential resources, creativity, skill and knowledge to the school, their peers and educators.
4. Need to recognise that schools are not the only places of learning. The home, school, work and community all offer opportunities for learning. Schools are situated in the world of work and therefore need to reflect evolving and open definitions of learning. Learning starts at birth and not simply when children start school.
5. Both work and schooling offer important opportunities for learning and are not mutually exclusive. While in many situations, work is detrimental, much work (including paid work) can contribute to the developing capacity of children.
6. Teachers have traditionally played a role as transmitters of knowledge and expertise – Article 29 implies a new focus on respecting teachers' ability to facilitate, empower and support children's own learning.
7. Children experience intrinsic as well as functional value in education. This has implications for addressing the motivation for children in enrolling and maintaining participation in schools. The active engagement of children in life and learning environments engages and strengthens their motivation.
8. The General Comment on Article 29 focuses on the importance of education in promoting respect for human dignity. However, for many children, schooling denies and undermines human dignity. It humiliates, and degrades and fails to value their experience.
9. Formal schooling which imposes inflexible structures which take no account of other demands on children, exclude many working children from access to education.
10. Listening to children's perspectives on what they value in schooling in both formal and non–formal sectors indicates that they often value the symbolic aspects of formal schooling even where the content of the curriculum and their treatment is in inconsistent with the rights of the child. It is therefore necessary to take account of these concerns whilst radically reforming formal schooling to create effective learning environments.

On the basis of these observations and principles, the following recommendations are designed to protect children now and protect them for the future.

These recommendations are relevant for all children, keeping specifically in mind that:

- Millions of children the world over are working;
- Their working environments, in many instances, provide learning opportunities;

- Many children are excluded and barred from schooling;
- The exclusion of children is both attitudinal and structural – especially economic structures.

We therefore recommend the following:

The following recommendations respond to Article 29 (a)

Which will also fulfil World fit for Children Clause 39 on the elimination of child labour and especially its call for 'quality basic education for all as a key strategy'

1. Children need and are entitled to an enabling learning environment within family, school and community.
2. Education must be developed with regard to and respect for all cultural values and contexts in which children live, whilst also accepting that some aspects of all cultures are detrimental to children's well-being, in accordance with the principles of the CRC.
3. Develop curricula which draw on and reflect the child's own environment in partnership with the skills, strengths and resources of local communities, NGOs, private sector and unions, as well as children themselves.
4. Respect children's own knowledge and understanding as a starting point for entry into schooling - use children's own strengths, resiliencies and competencies as resources in the school.
5. Facilitate the creation of structures outside school to open up opportunities for children to articulate their concerns and influence decisions and polices that affect their lives.
6. Create opportunities for children to contribute actively and meaningfully in all decision-making processes within the school environment – involves a commitment to sharing power, giving children the chance to think critically, influence the of scope of the school agenda.
7. Create opportunities for children to identify, develop and undertake activities in school which have a genuine purpose, value and outcome within their communities and fulfil real needs within those communities. Provide education that will enable children to take on and develop meaningful and productive work in their future lives.
8. Address the external political and economic realities - governments have agendas in funding education - need to make not only the principled case for change but also the pragmatic arguments of efficacy and cost-effectiveness of investing in child-centred education - similarly with policy makers, professionals, donors, NGOs and INGOs and the general public.
9. Need for inclusive approaches which seek to undermine discrimination, and exclusive practices and actively create environments in which working children (including disabled children, girls and other marginalised groups) can fully participate.
10. Recognising that schooling is one of many learning arenas for children, it needs to be designed to meet the needs and accommodate the other demands and realities of children's lives. Failing to do so will result in a denial of the children's fundamental right to education.
11. Implementation of Article 29 demands that human rights must be embedded in the practice, philosophy and social relations in schools – not just part of the taught curriculum. All forms of violence and other humiliating treatments and punishments of children must be abolished.

We anticipate that even with the effective implementation of the above recommendations, and even

with the introduction of free and compulsory education, there will continue to be children who are unable to access schools.

The following urgent recommendations are therefore offered with these children in mind:

- When children are employed in the worst forms of child labor, their situation is sometimes made even worse by well-intentioned preventative intervention. It is therefore important to understand why children are in the situation that they find themselves in, paying attention to socio-structural causes, and micro and macro events that affect the particular children and their families. Before any intervention is undertaken, careful consideration should be given to possible negative consequences.
- Interventions should address structural causes of child labor as well as the particular needs of the children. Structural causes include declining standards of global labor, as well as government and institutions that might control the work of children.
- Interventions need to take account of the scale of the problem. Before going to scale with a new initiative or program, there should be a process of testing and evaluating its effectiveness in other situations.
- Targeted programs are necessary for specially disadvantaged children. Such programs should include:

  -outreach to draw children into programs;

  -the creation of viable and sustainable alternatives for the children, including the possibility of acquiring adequate income through safer employment;

  -special learning opportunities, which, however, should try to avoid the stigma of inferiority; and

  -building trust and providing both physical and psychological help.
- The search for viable alternatives and routes of escape need to be worked out with the children themselves and, where relevant, the families, households and communities from which the children come. These communities are likely to be significant both in providing help for the children and in avoiding negative consequences.
- There is a need to establish independent structures within communities that enable children to participate in influencing decisions that affect them, and to evaluate and monitor the quality of all services for children, including learning opportunities.
- Public awareness needs to be improved to make people aware of structures in society that are harmful to children; to ensure social pressure against leaving children to work in undesirable circumstances; and to ensure that responses are informed and do not harm the children further.

IV. CHILDREN AND VIOLENCE STREAM GROUP

- Facilitators: Melanie Gow (World Vision International); Brent Parfitt (Ombudsman Office of BC)
- Rapporteur: Melanie Gow (World Vision International)
- Core resource team: John Kydd (IPSCA/WHO)

Formal presentations were provided on the following topics by identified experts:

- Definitional issues – John Kydd
- Ecology of human development (Jim Garbarino, Cornell University)
- Role of Ombudsman and other offices of the Legislature (Brent Parfitt)
- Corporal punishment (Susan Bitensky)
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and the role of children as participants (Helene Sackstein)

Stream Group Resources:

Taking the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in particular Article 29, the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child's General Comment on Education and the NGO Alternate Text to the " World Fit for Children" , as our frameworks for action, the Stream Group on children and violence worked towards concrete recommendations for change. The key recommendations are targeted at the governments' policy and decision-makers at the Special Session on Children.

To inform the discussion of the Stream Group, brief presentations from various experts were shared with the Group. A key theme for discussion, were definitions of violence, led by John Kydd from ISPCAN and consultant to the World Health Organisation. The Matrix (developed by John for use by the WHO and others) indicates the multi-sectoral approach that is required when tackling violence against children. It is also a valuable tool for identifying the key Articles from the CRC which can help guide best practice. The Matrix provided clarity and was a fundamental tool for developing the Group's key recommendations.

Items of Discussion:

- The importance of Ombudspersons and independent children's Commissioners was shared. In particular, Canada's Deputy Ombudsman shared his own experience, talking of the need for access to information, help lines and individual complaint mechanisms.
- One of the key issues was the need to define what the Group determined violence to be. Whilst there were obvious discussions around the physical expressions of violence, experts within the group also drew attention to emotional and psychological forms of violence as well as to neglect as a form of violence. There were also discussions about other forms of violence against children such as economic, political and structural violence. Each of these forms was accepted as a legitimate definition of forms of violence against children.
- Part of the challenge for the group was to identify some key recommendations for such an immense area as violence against children. In the end it was felt that it was important to look both at the overarching theme of violence and abuse but also at two sub-sections of this theme – corporal punishment and media, violence and children.

Recommended framework for implementation:

A) Six Underlying Principles

1. Child Development Based
2. Rights Based
3. Evidence Based
4. Adaptable
5. Accessible
6. Inter-Sectoral Collaboration including – Child Participation, Communities, Policy-Makers, Health, Social, Educational, Mass Media, Legal, NGO's / Associations, Donors/ Private sector

B) Stages of Implementation

1. Prevention
2. Protection
3. Recovery and Reintegration
4. Participation- By all children (Survivor, Perpetrator, etc)
5. Co-operation

Sectors:

(1) Corporal Punishment

Definition: Intentional infliction of physical pain or discomfort by an adult on a child to control, correct or punish the child.

Goal: Ultimate elimination of corporal punishment of children.

Recommended Strategies"

- Legal prohibition

"An adult who has care of the child shall not subject the child to corporal punishment. A person who violates this provision may be prosecuted under applicable criminal code provisions. Use of corporal punishment on children will be a factor considered in making custody decisions."

- Recommend prosecutorial restraint for adults in family circle.
- Repeal of inconsistent laws.
- Education: national and local educational campaigns using media and other dissemination techniques
- Independent, child-specific ombudsman to receive complaints from children and others.
- Training of people who deal with children (such as teachers, parents, psychologists, medical personnel, etc.) and of police attorneys and judges. Training shall include information on other non-violent techniques for controlling and educating children.
- Recovery and reintegration programs to help the child heal from impact, trauma, repressed anger and other adverse effects.
- Child participation as part of education and recovery and integration. Children will express

their feelings about corporal punishment.

(2) Child abuse, neglect and exploitation

The following recommendations apply to all forms of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This includes physical psychological/ emotional and sexual aspects.

1. By 2003, develop common definitions and indicators of child A/N/E adopted through consultation among all sectors in order to be as widely accepted as possible.
2. By 2005, develop laws and systems for the mandatory reporting of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
3. By 2005, develop and implement systems for the collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination of reliable disaggregated data of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
4. By 2006, all professionals, para-professionals and volunteers working with children will be trained on indicators and causes of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
5. By 2006, all professionals, para-professionals and volunteers serving children should be screened to detect those likely to harm children.
6. By 2006, each country in collaboration with professionals, experts and children, will create and implement a multi-sectoral public awareness campaign on the aetiology of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
7. By 2006, all children will have access to developmentally appropriate, free education in child abuse, neglect and exploitation prevention programs.
8. By 2006, each country will develop and implement community-based programs for pregnant women for pre and post natal care by trained and qualified people, including, but not limited to, mandatory continued home visits to all families with infants for the purpose of child development education promoting attachment and bonding and positive interactions between family members and infants.
9. By 2006, each country will ensure that professionals working with children will not only be trained according to CRC principles, but be highly valued by society re: improved working conditions and salaries comparable to other professionals, with the goal of decreasing turnover rates and increasing retention rates by 25% for the purpose of increasing stability and permanency in children's lives.
10. By 2006, each country will provide accessible, high quality universal care for pre-school children by qualified people trained in child development and children's rights.
11. By 2006, develop and implement free and accessible treatment and reintegration for the child victims and offenders of abuse, neglect and exploitation including the decriminalisation of the victims.
12. By 2006, all territorial/national and bodies will co-operate inter-sectorally to ensure that children in danger of abuse, neglect and exploitation will continue to be protected.

(3) Media Violence

Issues: Violent Games, Pornography (adult, child), Hate messages, Misleading information, Viruses / hacking

Objective: To reduce media models of violence by the year 2006

Inter-sectoral Measures and Strategies:

i) Prevention

- Awareness raising / campaigns
- Education for peace / C.R.
- Computer program/ filter/ software/ rating
- Parent / teacher / child education
- Law and policy reform

ii) Protection

- Child sensitive law policies
- Effective enforcement
- Community / NGO watchdog
- Private sector monitoring
- Codes of conduct

iii) Recovery / reintegration

- Media reprimand against violent media
- Traditional remedies: art therapy, cultural activities, indigenous practices for healing
- Community pressure for accountability
- Witness protection and victim assistance including legal aid and medical help
- Counselling and psychological follow up
- Compensation for victims

iv) Participation

- Child and young people network
- Community organisations mobilisation
- Teacher / parent vigilance
- State commitment and the engagement of state media

v) Co-operation

- Inter-ministerial co-operation
- Local/ state/ community/ educational institution
- Transnational regional co-operation
- Inter ethnic programs
- Inter generational programs
- Private sector co-operation

Recommendations 2001-2006:

That every country create and support:

- National plans of action on media violence
- National monitoring and reporting mechanisms / focal points

- National coalitions of media organisations that include training (consultations)
- Creation of a data base of relevant information available for public
- Hotline services and a system of service referral for reports
- National media awareness campaigns
- National child/ youth education campaigns that encourage critical thinking about media
- Creation and support for child – 2- child networks
- Identify and disseminate computer programs against all forms of media violence, (including hate literature, internet sexual exploitation, violence)
-Internet Media players, (corporations, conglomerates, and industry) to develop clear standards of conduct and co-operation that acknowledge children's rights as articulated under Article 17 of the UN CRC, and to adhere to them.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of points came out from the conference and were presented at the end by the conference rapporteurs: Gerison Lansdown and Cynthia Price-Cohen.

On the one hand, there is a **global context** impacting on children's right to education. Which involves both.

1) Threats such as:
   - Rapidly changing social, economic and political environment – globalisation is causing instability in children's lives and having significant impact on the nature and scale of child labour, access to education, conflict.
   - Inadequate contribution from governments to education – both donor and in developing countries. Only Sweden is meeting the UN target of 0.7% of GDP and many countries in the majority world are not prioritising education.
   - Increasing trend of exporting Western values and culture insensitively and without regard or respect for other cultures.
   - Growing inequality within and between countries causing instability and hardship for children; and growing numbers of children growing up alone as a result of poverty, HIV/ AIDS and conflict.
2) Opportunities such as:
   - Improved international instruments – CRC, ILO 182, Optional Potocols
   - UNGASS – opportunity of the commitments being made by governments
   - Growing body of knowledge of good practice, research and understanding on what works in developing education which is respectful of children's best interests and human dignity
   - Information technology – offers both a threat and opportunity for children

Factors to be addressed in the realisation of children's right to child-centred education:

1. The issues facing marginalised children are highly complex. There is a need for multi-sectoral responses. It is not possible to remove the barriers to education without bringing together social, economic, legal, commercial and cultural dimensions. Education cannot of itself protect children from harm. Furthermore, many interventions, however well-intended can have adverse consequences for children, if not considered in the context of these complexities.
2. It is important not to equate children's rejection of schooling with the rejection of learning. Formal schooling which imposes inflexible structures, fees and other barriers, which take no account of the complexities of children's lives and competing demands made upon them, excludes many marginalised children from access to education. We need to acknowledge that too many children experience schooling which is authoritarian, with irrelevant curriculum, inadequate teaching, humiliating practices and abusive treatment. It is often also an environment in which dominant cultures and values are often promoted to the exclusion of children's own language and culture and values. The General Comment on Article 29 focuses on the importance of education in promoting respect for human dignity. However, for many children, schooling denies and undermines human dignity. It humiliates, and degrades and

fails to value their experience.

3. Children bring a diversity of experience and history into school which is frequently disregarded – ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, as well as factors such as culture, poverty, work, social responsibility etc. These experiences add value and offer potential resources, creativity, skill and knowledge to the school, their peers and educators.
4. Schools are not the only places of learning. The home, school, work and community all offer opportunities for learning. Learning starts at birth and not simply when children start school.
5. Both work and schooling offer important opportunities for learning for children and are not mutually exclusive. While in many situations, work is detrimental, much work (including paid work) can contribute to the developing capacity of children.
6. Teachers have traditionally played a role as transmitters of knowledge and expertise – Article 29 implies a new focus on respecting teachers' ability to facilitate, empower and support children's own learning.
7. Children experience intrinsic as well as functional value in education. This has implications for addressing the motivation for children in enrolling and maintaining participation in schools. The active engagement of children in life and learning environments engages and strengthens their motivation.
8. Listening to children's perspectives on what they value in schooling in both formal and non–formal sectors indicates that they often value the symbolic aspects of formal schooling even where the curriculum and their treatment is inconsistent with their human rights – for example, uniforms, certification, public recognition of status. It is therefore necessary to take account of these concerns whilst radically reforming formal schooling to create effective learning environments.
9. Education is important in situations of crisis as a normative force, and a source of routine, security and hope.

Recommendations for developing child-centred learning opportunities:

1. Children need and are entitled to an enabling learning environment within their family, school and community.
2. Education must be developed with regard to and respect for all cultural values, and contexts in which children live, whilst also accepting that some aspects of all cultures are detrimental to children's well-being as defined by the principles of the CRC. Children need to have access to knowledge of their own and others cultures, traditions and histories in order to develop a sense of identity and self-esteem. Schools or other learning environments can be places for building positive individual and collective identity.
3. Inclusive approaches to education must be developed which challenge discrimination and exclusive practices, and actively create environments in which all girls and boys, including those who are disabled or otherwise marginalised, can fully participate.
4. Curricula must be developed which draw on and reflect the child's own environment in partnership with the skills, strengths and resources of families, local communities, NGOs, as well as children themselves.
5. Opportunities must be established for children to contribute actively and meaningfully in all decision-making processes within the school environment. This will involve a commitment

to sharing power, giving children the chance to think critically and influence the entire school agenda. Children's own knowledge and understanding must be respected as a starting point for entry into schooling, using children's own strengths, resiliencies and competencies as resources in the school. It is important to create learning opportunities for children to identify, develop and undertake activities in school which have a genuine purpose, value and outcome within their communities and promote social, economic and ecological regeneration within those communities.

6. Structures outside school need to be developed to open up opportunities for children to articulate their concerns and influence decisions and policies that affect their lives.
7. Whilst it is necessary to make the principled case for change with governments, it is also important to address the pragmatic arguments of efficacy and cost-effectiveness of investing in child-centred education for all ages. Similarly, the arguments need to be made with policy makers, professionals, donors, NGOs and INGOs, and the wider public.
8. It is important to recognise that schooling is one of many learning arenas for children, it needs to be designed to accommodate the diverse realities of children's lives. Failing to do so will result in a denial of the children's fundamental right to education.
9. Implementation of Article 29 demands that human rights must be embedded in the practice, philosophy and social relations in schools – not just part of the taught curriculum. All forms of violence, teaching or reinforcing ethnic hatreds and false histories and humiliating and degrading treatments and punishments of children must be abolished. Peace education, conflict prevention and resolution skills must be incorporated into the curriculum.
10. Successful models developed for working children in the non-formal school sector need to be adapted for other marginalised groups of children. Places where children congregate need to be identified and positive learning opportunities developed in those environments.
11. Media literacy should be promoted as an important way of teaching children to be discerning and to develop the skills and confidence to make informed choices and be able avoid manipulation. Opportunities to work with the media should be sought to promote awareness of children's rights, challenge violations of these rights, and create avenues for children to access the media to express themselves.
12. Education, both formal and informal, should explicitly engage children in activities that build resilience, nurture spirituality and cultural identity and facilitate the return of joy and celebration.
13. All professionals in contact with children need training on the CRC and its implications for their practice. Parents are naturally educators of children who themselves need to be provided with opportunities for education, support and information.

NEXT STEPS: CHILDREN AS PARTNERS

Building on the findings and recommendations from the 2nd International Conference on Children's Rights in Education, ICRD and its partners see children's participation as the critical area to focuss on. It is clear from this conference that children and youth should be more fully integrated into society as participant citizens because they are potentially the greatest resource for dealing successfully, in the long term, with the myriad of problems and opportunities faced by humanity. To fully realize this potential it will be necessary to strengthen support for child capacities, child participation and partnerships between children and adults.

At present, countries and agencies bringing policy and programme activities into compliance with the CRC quickly encounter the need to establish mechanisms for implementing article 12 in ways benefiting children and society and respecting its broad reach. However, they also meet an immediate obstacle in the lack of guidance and good information about what processes and structures work well in establishing and sustaining children's participation. Although substantial experience and research of relevance already exist, these resources have not been adequately documented, collected, evaluated, organized, and internationally disseminated for general use in establishing child participation policies and activities.

The purpose of the "Children As Partners" project is to provide governments and civil society organizations with critical information and resources to help them implement proven best practices to promote and manage meaningful and sustainable children's participation. It will eliminate bottlenecks in the implementation of CRC Article 12 caused by lack of information about viable alternatives and how to implement them.

At present, research on children and participation is in progress, an International Symposium is planned to take place in August,2002 in Victoria, and a regional meeting in Asia, 2003.

Specific activities planned include:

April 2002: Research review and project planning meeting. [Location to be decided]

August 2002: [Programs planned for Victoria, British Columbia]

- University graduate course on children's participation (A foundational course for university students and for national agency and community service providers and policy leaders to present and test the communicability and integrity of the knowledge base and its implications, and to establish programs of implementation in Canada to be monitored and to inform further refinements)
- International symposium of experts and practitioners (A working symposium to review, challenge and strengthen the child participation knowledge base and to expand understanding of its potential for applications within and across a wide variety of cultural conditions.)
- International workshop on children's participation (A workshop of those working with children - parents, psychologists, health professionals, social workers, lawyers, educators, policy makers - to explore and learn to apply promising models to strengthen the ability of practitioners to implement sustainable and meaningful child participation in a wide variety of field and cultural settings.)

June 2002 - March 2003: Regional information-gathering and consultations (to identify and reference successful existing models and programs; to determine special needs, opportunities and resources relative to child participation; and to assist in planning to serve capacity building) [Locations to be determined]

June 2003: International Conference on Children's Participation [Projected for Bangkok]

December 2003: Begin dissemination of information through project partners, national and regional child service mechanisms, through publications, and through distance learning Internet programs of the ICRD Child Rights Education-International component.

For more information or updates please contact the Institute for Child Rights and Development or look at our website www.uvic.ca/icrd.

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